

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AGR-20 CEA-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

EB-11 FRB-02 H-03 INR-10 INT-08 L-03 LAB-06 NSAE-00

NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 AID-20 CIEP-02 SS-20 STR-08

TAR-02 TRSE-00 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-03 FEA-02 OMB-01

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9646

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN, EEC, UK

SUBJECT: BRITISH INDUSTRY FIRMLY OPPOSES WITHDRAWAL FROM
THE EC

1. THE CONFEDERATION OF BRITISH INDUSTRY (CBI) HAS
MADE IT CLEAR THAT IT IS FIRMLY OPPOSED TO ANY MOVE
THAT WOULD LEAD TO BRITAIN'S WITHDRAWAL FROM THE
EUROPEAN COMMUNITY. IN A REPORT ADOPTED BY ITS GOVERN-
ING COUNCIL ON APRIL 17, THE CBI STATES THAT WITHDRAWAL
WOULD HAVE SERIOUS POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES
FOR THE UK. THE REPORT ACKNOWLEDGES THAT THERE SHOULD
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BE A MORE EQUITABLE SHARING OF THE BURDENS AND BENEFITS

OF MEMBERSHIP WITHIN THE EC, AND IN PARTICULAR THAT THE COMMUNITY'S BUDGETARY ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD BE REVISED. HOWEVER, IT SHOULD BE POSSIBLE TO MAKE THESE CHANGES THROUGH THE NORMAL BARGAINING PROCESS WITHIN THE EC INSTITUTIONS, WITHOUT HAVING TO REVISE THE ROME TREATY OR THE TREATY OF ACCESSION.

2. AT A PRESS CONFERENCE ON APRIL 17, CBI DIRECTOR GENERAL ADAMSON SAID THAT THE CBI COUNCIL HAD ENDORSED THE REPORT WITH AN "EXTRAORDINARY DEGREE" OF UNANIMITY. WITHDRAWAL FROM THE COMMUNITY, HE SAID, WOULD BE "ABSURDITY AND MADNESS." A BRITAIN THAT HAD LEFT THE COMMUNITY COULD NOT INFLUENCE THE EVOLUTION OF THE WORLD'S TRADE AND MONETARY SYSTEMS. IN A TELEVISION INTERVIEW LATER IN THE DAY, ADAMSON SAID THAT FOREIGN SECRETARY CALLAGHAN'S STATEMENT ON RENEGOTIATIONS TO THE EC COUNCIL ON APRIL 1 SEEMED "RATHER CRASS." CBI MEMBERS HAVE FOUND THAT THEIR EUROPEAN FRIENDS CONSIDER IT "REALLY VERY UN-BRITISH TO WANT TO GO BACK ON A TREATY WHICH PARLIAMENT HAS PASSED."

3. WE ARE FORWARDING THE TEXT OF THE CBI REPORT BY AIRGRAM.

4. COMMENT. THE CBI, REFLECTING THE VIEWS OF BRITISH INDUSTRY, HAS CONSISTENTLY FAVORED EC MEMBERSHIP. THE NEAR-UNANIMOUS ADOPTION OF THIS REPORT, AND THE BITING REMARKS BY ITS DIRECTOR GENERAL, PRESAGE A CONTINUING AND VIGOROUS CBI CAMPAIGN AGAINST WITHDRAWAL. SINCE THE CBI IS A GENUINELY REPRESENTATIVE BODY, WITH A TALENTED STAFF AND A FLAIR FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS, THIS CAMPAIGN WILL HAVE SOME EFFECT, AT LEAST ON PUBLIC OPINION, AND PROBABLY ON THE GOVERNMENT AS WELL.

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